

To Die for My Work

We do not see
objectively;
people think we want to be
to be notorious.

I do not want
the fire line,
alerts
suspend.

I do not want to be a martyr
break my struggle,
we all have a day and time.

I was in a shelter,
under surveillance
day and night
without being able to see my son.

Isolation

constantly shifting,
a 'friendly solution'.
The adrenaline is like an addiction,
my future is this.

I do not want to die now
when the criminals want me to,
I will die struggling. With that vision
I take care of myself
under fire, I respect certain rules.
A bodyguard
I told him: If I die, please give this
to my son. He replied
'If you are killed
I will be dead too.'

There are certain things that I do not tell.
There are several things I do not know:
how to encrypt information,
keep things safe,
a sound
and structured security vision,
contingency
plan.
I do not want to die for my work,
I want to die
old.
So far I have learned how to say no
to protect myself.

Composed by Juliana Mensah from an interview transcript of a Mexican woman human rights defender from the research project 'Navigating Risk, Managing Security, and Receiving Support', which focuses on the experiences of human rights defenders at risk in Colombia, Mexico, Egypt, Kenya, and Indonesia (securityofdefendersproject.org)